A black and white portrait of Iannis Xenakis, an elderly man with short, light-colored hair, looking slightly to the right. The image is split vertically by a white line. The left side of the portrait is set against a black background, while the right side is set against a white background. The text is overlaid on the white background.

2022

CHRISTIAN BENNING PERCUSSION GROUP

# IANNIS XENAKIS

100 YEARS



» **An acoustic and optical pleasure in a class of its own -  
Standing ovations and loud cheers.** «

Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung

## COMPOSER. MATHEMATICIAN. ARCHITECT.

Romanian city of birth Braila.

The program is based on celebrating his anniversary year and on the idea of raising Iannis Xenakis to the same level with grandmasters of music history, who were also ahead of their time and set new creative standards in their creative process.

The Christian Benning Percussion Group has developed into an established ensemble on the European music scene in recent years. The regular cast around soloist and artistic director Christian Benning, as well as the other multi-percussionists Marcel Morikawa, Patrick Stapleton, Felix Kolb, Godwin Schmid and Jan Cibej vary in the size of the formation (trio to sextet) due to the many different concert projects and productions.

After groundbreaking debut concerts at international festivals and renowned concert halls in Germany, Austria and Italy last year with their BEATHoven repertoire, the six multi-percussionists have dedicated themselves to a very special project especially for 2022 - the anniversary of Iannis Xenakis (1922-2001). The Franco-Greek composer is not only considered one of the most important ones of the 20th century because of his revolutionary and novel composition techniques as well as his mathematically-influenced compositional style. He also played an important key role in the fact that percussion was able to take its permanent place as a solo and chamber music instrument.

The ensemble will have the great honor of performing the official anniversary concert on the 29th of May in 2022 - Iannis Xenakis' 100th birthday - at the Teatrul Maria Filotti in Xenakis'

In the repertoire of this artistic project, movements and complete versions of Xenakis' most important compositions for percussion (including Rebonds, Okho, and Pleiades) are interwoven with works and arrangements by composers who are also familiar to a wide ranged audience. Since Xenakis spent most of his life and work in Paris, alongside Johann Sebastian Bach and Ludwig van Beethoven, Maurice Ravel as a Parisian composer as well as his teacher and supporter Olivier Messiaen are represented in the concert program.

Rebonds was composed between 1987 and 1989 (after Psappha) as second and last solo work for percussion by Iannis Xenakis. Many different elements of this piece, such as the idea of indeterminacy or the effect of the created impression that more than just one player would interpret the ostinati and rhythmic lines, have created completely new timbres and a new character for solo percussion.

Okho is a composition for three percussionists that Xenakis completed in 1989. It is originally written for three djembes (traditional, rope-covered goblet drums from Africa with a large corpus), which are mostly played with hands. For reasons of tonal flexibility and abundance, Christian Benning Percussion Group decided to interpret the work on multi

percussion setups consisting of several types of drums, played with sticks.

For his sextet work *Pleiades*, Iannis Xenakis was inspired in 1978 by the Pleiades of the ancient Greek mythology - the daughters of the Titan Atlas and the Oceanid Pleione. The titles of the individual movements relate to their sound characteristics: *Peaux* with drums, *Clavier* with mallets, *Métaux* with metallic instruments, *Mélanges* as a mixture. The ensemble plays itself in the best sense of the word in repetitive trance and let sounds melt together. Nobody loses their head in the process, because Xenakis' music has sharpness and friction that flash out as clear accents, like shooting stars.

Each of the six musicians plays an own set-up with timpani, large drums, toms, congas and bongos. There are also the standardized, chromatic mallet instruments vibraphone, marimba and xylophone. In the *Métaux* set, six sets of very special metal instruments - the so-called *sixxen* - designed by Xenakis himself, play a special role in the percussionists' setup. Their special sound world between tubular bells and glockenspiel is particularly well suited to producing almost amorphous clouds of sound from the individu-

al tones of the players due to their intermediate tone tuning. Thanks to temporal overlays and moments of highest musical density, the sounds swirl like flocks of birds or - to stay in the astral image - stardust around the heads of the audience.

The six musicians all got to know each other during their studies at the Munich University of Music and Performing Arts. There they studied with Peter Sadlo, Adel Shalaby, Raymond Curfs, Arnold Riedhammer, Alexej Gerassimez and Wolfram Winkel, all of whom are mentors and supporters of the ensemble. The first joint international concerts of the percussionists took place in 2012, among others, in Egypt and Oman. This pure percussion formation was officially founded by Christian Benning in 2015 under the name Christian Benning & Percussion No. 1. Since then, concerts have taken place at the Center for Arts & Media in Karlsruhe, at Laeiszhalle in Hamburg, at the European Weeks of Passau or at the Philharmonic Hall of Munich.

The ensemble recently made its debut as Christian Benning Percussion Group (since 2020) at Glocke Bremen, at Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, at the Festival of Young Artists in Bayreuth or at the Hercules Hall of Munich.

» **A firework of sounds by the Christian Benning Percussion Group - With an exuberant joy of playing [...] Christian Benning fathoms all melodic and dynamic opportunities of each single instrument and expands them by unheard-novel effects.** «

Münchner Merkur

» A Phenomenon «  
- Süddeutsche Zeitung

» Rhythmic Geniuses «  
- Die ZEIT

» Full of elegant Perfection «  
- Münchner Merkur

**156**  
INSTRUMENTS

**100**  
YEARS

**6**  
MUSICIANS

**1**  
COMPOSER

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**IANNIS XENAKIS (1922-2001)**

Rebonds I Solo  
 Part A  
 Part B

**MAURICE RAVEL (1875-1937)**

arr. Safri Duo & Tchiki Duo

Alborada del Gracioso I Duo

**IANNIS XENAKIS (1922-2001)**

Pleiades I Sextet  
 I. Clavier  
 II. Peaux  
 III. Métaux  
 IV. Mélanges

**INTERMISSION****LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)**

arr. Peter J. Lawrence

Moonlight Sonata op. 27 no. 2 I Quintet  
 I. Adagio Sostenuto  
 II. Allegretto  
 III. Presto Agitato

**OLIVIER MESSIAEN (1908-1992)**

arr. Christian Benning Percussion Group

Preludes I Sextet  
 II. Chant d'extase dans un paysage triste  
 III. Le nombre léger  
 VIII. Un reflet dans le vent

**IANNIS XENAKIS (1922-2001)**

Okho I Trio

**JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1675-1750)**

arr. Peter J. Lawrence

Prelude in c-minor I Sextet

The repertoire of the first part of the concert can be put together variably, e.g. only one movement from Rebonds and only two movements from Pleiades. The two halves of the concert can be swapped with each other. During the break, the instruments on stage have to be rebuilt, as the arrangement of the instruments in Beethoven, Messiaen and Bach is different from the structure for Pleiades. Several encores are possible.

# CHRISTIAN BENNING

Multi percussionist Christian Benning (\*1995) is meanwhile perceived internationally as a formative personality of a young and progressive generation of percussionists.

Concerts as a soloist as well as with his ensemble Christian Benning Percussion Group have taken him to the Hercules Hall of Munich, to Glocke in Bremen, to Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg, to the Beethoven House in Bonn, to the Musikverein of Graz, to the Duomo di Milano, to the Egyptian State Opera, to the Royal Opera House of Oman or to the Abbey of San Diego.

Competitive successes and concert tours through Asia, Africa, Europe and North America with renowned orchestras underpin his artistic versatility as well as concert projects at the Rheingau Music Festival, the Heidelberg Spring, La Folle Journée or productions on behalf of Deutschlandfunk, Bavarian and Südwest-Rundfunk, when he also premiered and recorded some of his own compositions.

In addition to his work as solo timpanist at the Opera Mauritius of Port Louis and as teacher at the National Conservatory of Mauritius, he is currently developing a new hybrid percussion

instrument, called CreativeBeats.

As scholarship holder of the German Scholarship Foundation and as culture award winner of the Süddeutsche Zeitung and the city of Pasing, he works interdisciplinary in cooperation with Holger Geschwindner on innovative training methods through an effective combination of music and sport, for which he invented an own notation system.

Since 2009 he has already been studying as pre-college student at the Munich University of Music and Performing Arts with Prof. Adel Shalaby, where he then completed his Bachelor and Master studies with Prof. Dr. Peter Sadlo, Prof. Arnold F. Riedhammer and Prof. Alexej Gerassimez. He gained further study experience in the USA with Prof. Robert van Sice at the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University and at the Yale School of Music. In 2021 he has been selected to be promoted in the very first grade of the new postgraduate excellence program in Munich called Excellence in Performance.

Master classes and joint concerts with Evelyn Glennie, Martin Grubinger, Marin Alsop, Leon Fleisher, Lang Lang or Kent Nagano complete his huge range of artistic experiences.



» Christian Benning is one of a kind and one of the most gifted percussionists of our time. Whether drum set, marimba oder with a single snare drum: Benning convinces through an extraordinary culture of playing, with rousing rhythms and with an outstanding tempo. «

MAIN POST

# CHRISTIAN BENNING PERCUSSION GROUP

## PATRICK STAPLETON

Patrick Stapleton (1993) is a graduate from the University of Music and Performing Arts in Munich where he initially studied with Prof. Adel Shalaby, Prof. Dr. Peter Sadlo and Prof. Alexej Gerassimez.

Apart from performing as soloist, he particularly contributes to countless chamber music projects, during which he has worked together with world-famous artists such as Steve Reich and has already appeared on two recordings released by the renowned label Genuin Classics. He is a founding member of the Christian Benning Percussion Group, plays at The Lion King in Hamburg and frequently is a part of successful crossover projects like MEUTE or the VKKO.

Amongst others, he has played at such famous concert halls as the Philharmonic Hall of Munich, the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg, the Royal Opera House of Muscat, the Cairo Opera House and the Moulin Rouge in Paris.

Stapleton is a multiple laureate at international musical competitions. Most recently he was awarded the Music Sponsorship Prize 2020 of the Konzertverein Ingolstadt as well as the 1st prize of the Kulturkreis Gasteig Music Competition 2020 in Munich.

## GODWIN SCHMID

Godwin Schmid was born in Landsberg am Lech in 1996. He got his first drum lessons from his father when he was three years old. In 2014 he was awarded with Landsberg's Cultural Scholarship. In 2013/14 he attended the Vocational School of Music in Krumbach where he was taught by Stefan Blum. In October 2014 he began his studies at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Munich with Franz Bach. From 2016 to 2018 he was an intern in the Philharmonic Orchestra of Würzburg. He was also able to gain valuable experiences in orchestras such as the Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra, Munich Symphony Orchestra, Bochum Symphony Orchestra, Hof Symphony Orchestra, the Augsburg State Theater and the Munich State Opera. In 2019 he completed his Bachelor's degree with Claudio Estay, then began his Master's degree with Prof. Raymond Curfs.

Since 2020 he is member of the Christian Benning Percussion Group.

## FELIX KOLB

Felix Kolb was born in Nuremberg in 1994, studied Percussion in Munich at the University for Music and Performing Arts and was part of the renowned academy program of the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra. As freelance percussionist he concentrates on the symphonic repertoire and has already played concert projects all over Europe, but also in Egypt and in the United States of America. He has worked with many famous musicians and conductors such as Herbert Blomstedt, Zubin Mehta, Mariss Jansons, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Kirill Petrenko, Daniel Harding and Sir Simon Rattle.

Since 2016 he is member of the Christian Benning Percussion Group.

## MARCEL MORIKAWA

Marcel Kentaro Morikawa (1992 in Cologne) took his first percussion lessons in 2006 with Robert Schäfer (Gürzenich Orchestra), as well as piano lessons with Susanna Cizmarovic. He began his Bachelor's degree in 2009 with Prof. Carlos Tarcha at the University of Music and Dance in Cologne, while he spent one year as an Erasmus student at the University of Music in Bucharest in the percussion class of Prof. Alexandru Matei. In 2014 he started a pedagogical degree and an artistic Master's degree at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Munich with Prof. Dr. Peter Sadlo, after whose sudden death he continued his studies with Claudio Estay (Bavarian State Opera). In 2017/18 he was an intern at the Hof Symphony Orchestra, where he is still substituting on a regular basis ever since, as well as at the Munich Chamber Opera, in the Gärtnerplatz Theater and in the Bavarian State Orchestra. In 2018 he won the 2nd prize at the international percussion competition ItalyPAS (vibraphone category).

Since 2015 he has been permanent member of the Christian Benning Percussion Group, with which he has already performed in halls such as the Philharmonie am Gasteig or the Elbphilharmonie. He is currently studying with Prof. Raymond Curfs (Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra).

## JAN ČIBEJ

Jan Čibej graduated with top marks in 2017 from the Conservatory for Music and Ballet in Ljubljana in the percussion class of Prof. Simon Klavžar. He is currently studying at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Munich with Prof. Alexej Gerassimez.

In 2014 and 2016 he won first prizes as soloist at the Svirél International Music Competition and in 2015 a first prize as member of the Slovenian Percussion Trio. In 2016 he was finalist of the international Marimba Festiva Competition in Bamberg. In addition, he won prizes at the TEMSIG competitions in 2011, 2014 and 2017. In 2017 he won the third prize at the international Percussion Youth Competition in Sint-Truiden, Belgium. As Dendrocopos Percussion Duo with Luka Poljanec he won the international percussion competitions in Luxembourg (including audience award) and in Svirél in 2018. In 2019 he participated in the Concours de Geneve International Competition.

In 2021 he primarily was part of the Christian Benning Percussion Group.



# MULTI PERCUSSIONS

» Christian Benning's instrumental virtuosity which he multiply proves by technical precision and refinement, is supplemented by a soft-graceful style of playing. [...] Elbphilharmonie holds its breath for tension and pure emotion. «

Hamburg Magazin

#### Mallets

2x Marimba (5 Octaves), 3x Vibraphone, Xylophone, Carillon, Crotales, MalletKAT (incl. Stand & Amp)

#### Drumset

Bass Drum 18", Snare Drum 14" & 10", Toms 15" & 14" & 10", 9x Cymbals, Woodblock, 2x Cowbell, (incl. Hardware & Carpet)

#### Percussion

Triangle, Chimes, Shakers

#### Peaux

6x Bass Drum, 6x Timpani, 18x Toms, 6x Congas, 6x Pair of Bongos

#### Métaux

6x Sixxen

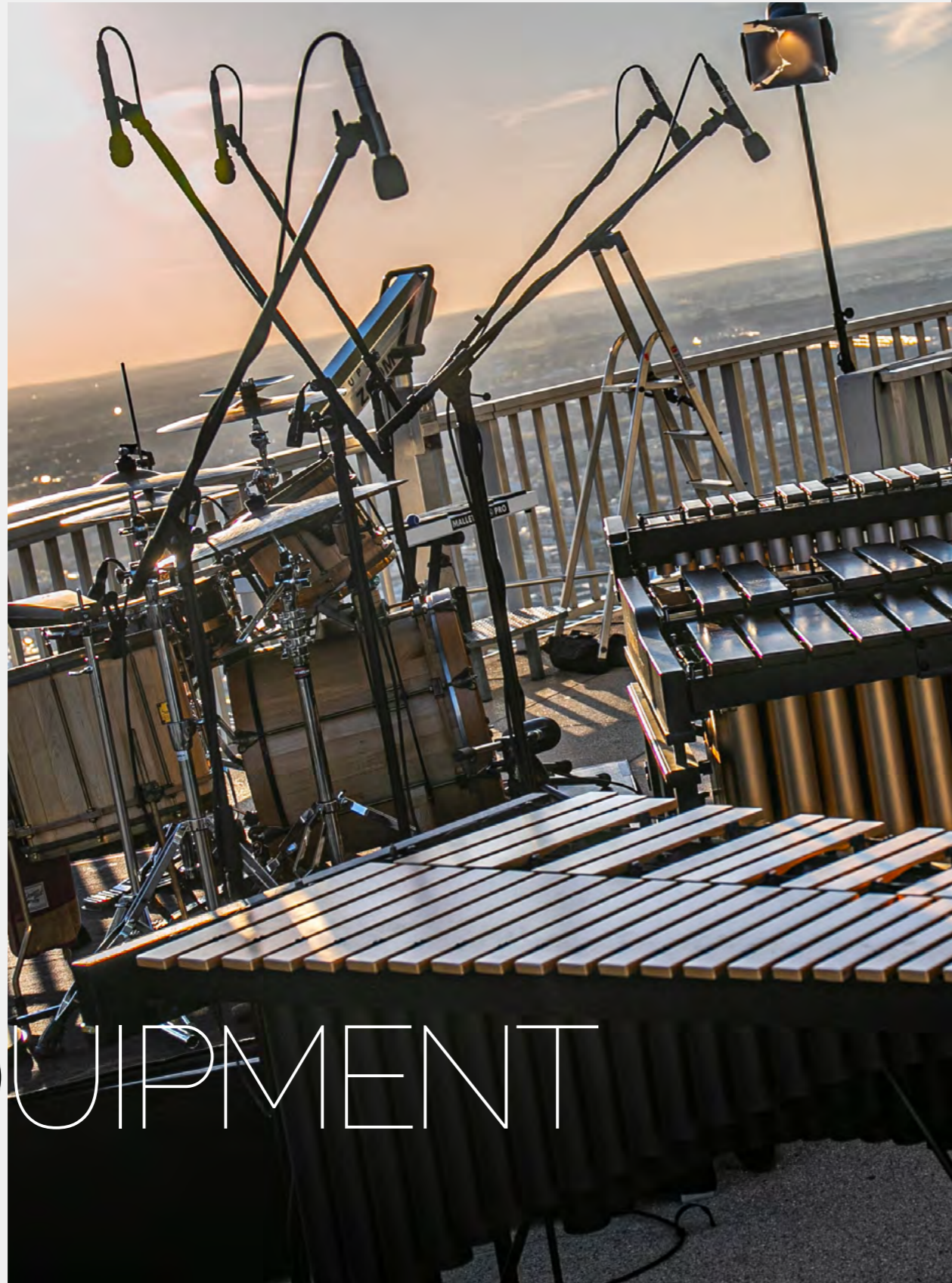
#### Okho

3x Bass Drum, 6x Toms, 3x Congas, 3x Pair of Bongos

#### Rebonds

Bass Drum, Tom, Conga, Pair of Bongos, 5x Woodblocks



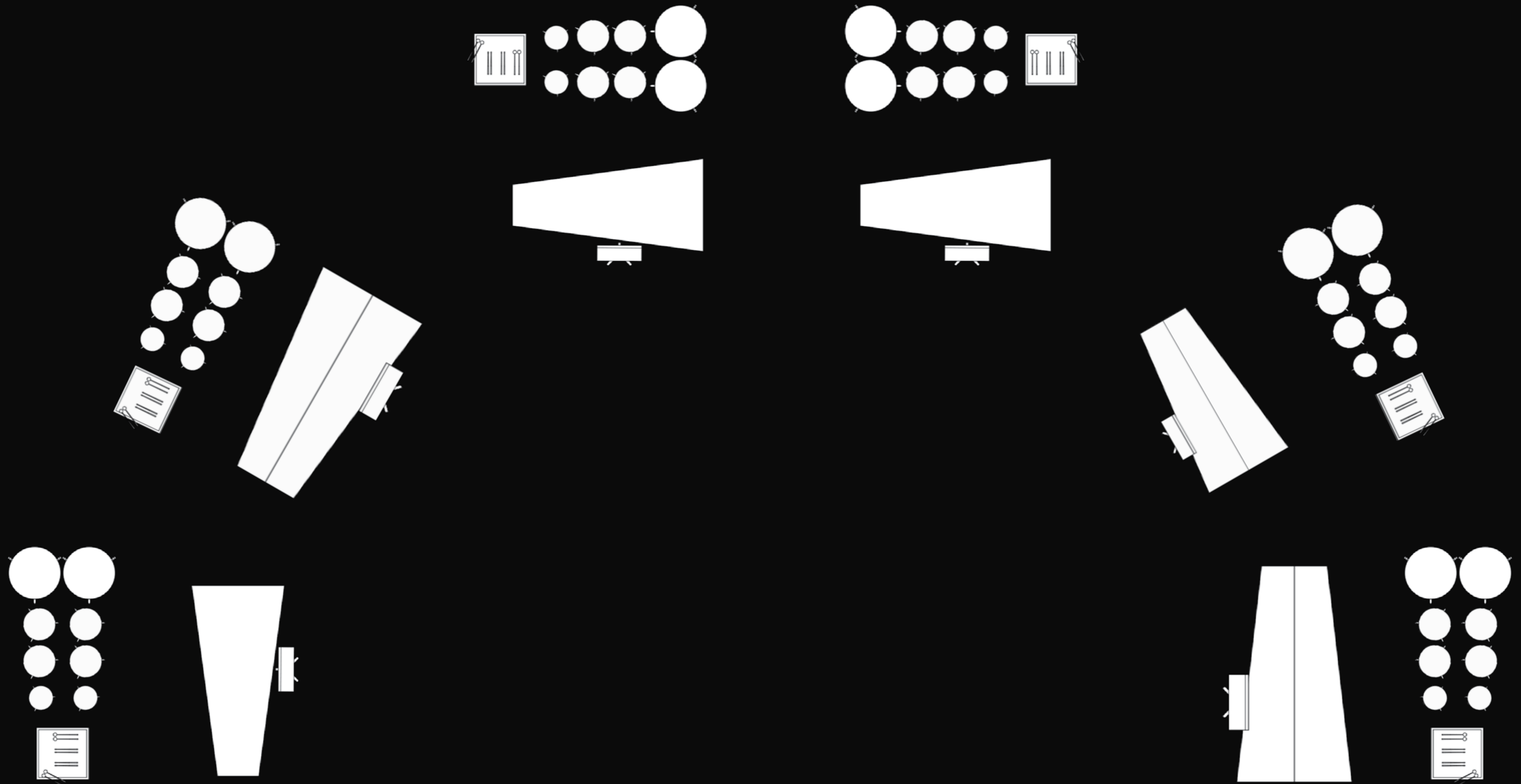


# EQUIPMENT

Music Stands	12
Electrical Connections on Stage	2
Drum Raiser / Podiums	8 (1 meter x 2 meter)
Radio Microphone	1 (incl. stand)
Sound System:	For Audience
InEar-Monitoring-System:	For the six Musicians
Light Technician:	During Soundcheck and during the Show
Sound Technician:	During Soundcheck and during the Show
In case of Live Video Projection:	Canvas, Beamer, 3-5 Cameras Projection with lowest possible delay In Coordination with CBPG
In case of Live Video Streaming:	20-30 (Overhead) Microphones, Drumset Microphones 3-5 Cameras In Coordination with CBPG

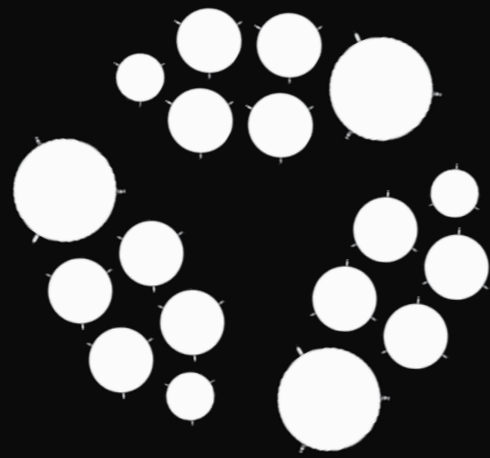
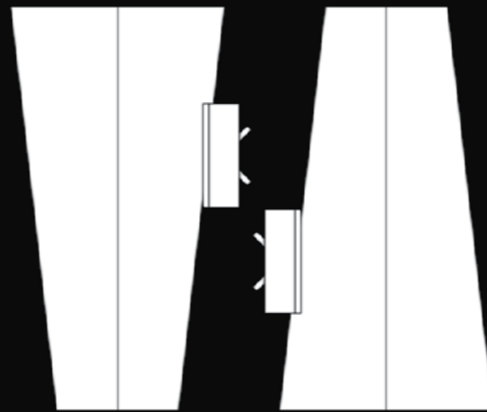
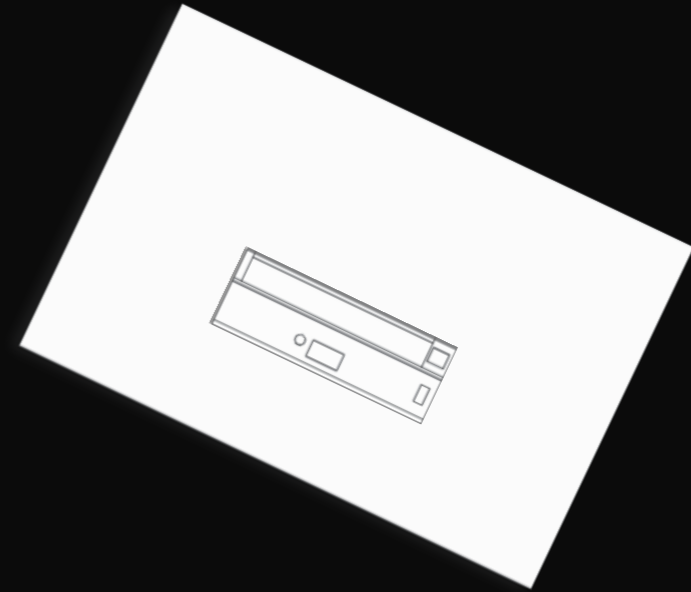
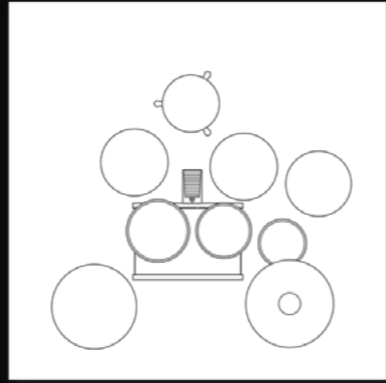
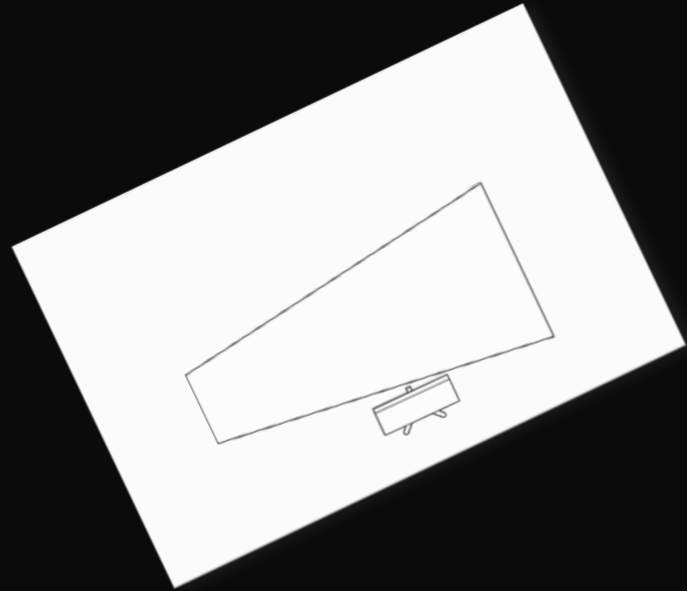
STAGE

STAGE PLAN



AUDIENCE

STAGE



STAGE PLAN

AUDIENCE



[www.christianbenning.de](http://www.christianbenning.de)



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